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Members of the Secretariat: Mátyás Rákosi, Mihály Farkas (ousted in 1955), Lajos Ács, Béla Vég, János Matolcsi.

Chairman of the Central Committee of Control: Károly Kiss.

Below follows a short biography of each of the more important office-holders in June, 1955, in Hungary in alphabetical order, along with the biographies of persons recently eliminated from the political hierarchy but who are deemed to be important for their previous activities and, perhaps, for their future potentialities.

ÁCS, LAJOS. Member of the Central Committee, member of the Political Committee since 1953, member of the Secretariate of the Communist Party since 1955. In charge of organization, especially among the peasants. A party bureaucrat.

ALTOMÁRE, IVÁN. Minister of the Food Industry. Information lacking. 645

APRÓ, ANTAL. Minister of Building Materials, Deputy Prime-Minister. Former Chairman of the Hungarian Trade Union Association. Young and promising Communist.

BATA, ISTVÁN. Minister of Defence. Lieutenant General, and former Chief of Staff of the Hungarian Army; as such he actually rules the Army in the name of Farkas Mihály, his predecessor. Bata was 645 701

645 [701] before the war a career officer in the Russian Red Army of the USSR and a Russian citizen. Succeeded Farkas in 1953.

BEBRITS, LAJOS. Minister of Post and Transportation. "1. Was taken to Russia as prisoner in the first war and was trained there. He went over to the United States in the twenties, where he became chief editor of the "Hungarian Future", participated in the underground movements and organized the Hungarian Communist movement. When Sándor Magyar and György Endresz, pilots of the aircraft "Justice for Hungary", arrived to New York after their ocean flight - Lajos Bebrits lead a group of Hungarian Communists to the port to demonstrate against the pilots of "Justice for Hungary", so that he was arrested by the police and sentenced in Newark under the charge of rioting. He was actively engaged in pioneer activities among the Hungarians of Miami and founded a Hungarian club. After the termination of World War II Bebrics returned to Hungary. 2. Neither Moscow-trained Communist, nor Nazi. 3. Not a Soviet citizen. 4. Has a political black-book. 5. Educated journalist, speaks English, Russian and Hungarian."

665 647 BENKE, VALERIA. Chairman of the Hungarian Office for Radio Broadcasts. One of the leaders of the post-war Communist womens' front organization, the MMDSZ, later General Secretary of the Peace Council.

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spite of the fact that for the last century Hungary has known a relatively peaceful period disrupted only by the disaster of the Great War. But today as yesterday, the Hungarian peasant makes the best and smartest Hussar in the world. By enlisting in the cavalry the Hungarian returns to his natural element, to which his being reacts in the same way as it reacts to the rhythm of the Hungarian word or of Hungarian music.

We mentioned above the dance of Hungarian raiders at St. Gallen in 926, and we quoted the medieval preacher's remarks about the dances in the spinnery which, in his words, were the dances of the Black Army. The Black Army, set up in 1459, consisted of two parts; the Czech and Serbian mercenaries, who composed the regiments of foot-soldiers, and more than double the number of light Hungarian cavalry organized on the model of the old Hungarian cavalry. Until its dispersion and disintegration after King Mathias' death, the Black Army was one of the greatest regular armies of all times. Its Hungarian cavalry was the forebear and model of all Hussar regiments in the world up to our days, in organization, outfit, and appearance. As recently as the Napoleonic Wars the Hussar regiments of foreign countries were largely composed of Hungarians. The famous French Hussars of Louis XIII, Richelieu, and Villars, those of the Prussian Ziethen and of Maria Theresa were composed nearly exclusively of Hungarians. After Rákóczi was defeated by the Habsburgs in his war of liberty, one of his lieutenants, Bercsényi, emigrated to France to become Commander of the Guard of Louis XIV. Bercsényi organized Louis XIV's famous Hungarian Hussars and was given the utmost military honour — that of Maréchal de France. Many Hungarian Hussars went to the United States with Lafayette, Rochambeau, and Lauzun

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701 and took a prominent part in the liberation of America.
535 Of these, Colonel Kovács and Captain Poleretzky were the most prominent. The Hussars of Victor Emanuel and of Garibaldi were mostly Hungarians, and about 1840, Hungarian cavalry officers visiting England were amazed to find that the organization and equipment of British Hussars were exactly the same as that of their early Hungarian models.

Parallel with the Hungarian Hussars developed the history of the Hungarian foot-soldier, which from the fifteenth to the early eighteenth century, unlike the regularly organized Hungarian cavalry, consisted preponderantly of foreign mercenary elements. It is useful to take good note of these facts because they are necessary for the proper understanding of Hungarian folk-dancing. From the fifteenth to the early eighteenth century the foot-soldiers in the Hungarian armies were mostly mercenaries recruited from rootless Slav elements. Naturally this must have shown in their celebrations and dances, which had many Slav characteristics. The foot-soldiers' dance which developed and flourished in this period was known in Hungary and abroad as the Hajdu or Hayduck dance, from the collective name of cattle-drovers, among whom there were many Slavs, and whose role and number in the Hungarian foot-regiments were important. This dance flourished only as long as the mercenary foot-regiments existed. With their discontinuation it soon fell into oblivion.

535 Not so the dances of the mounted soldiers. The idea of the Hussar and the idea of the Hungarian horseman are, so to say, synonymous. As the Hussar is the direct continuation of the mounted Hungarian soldier, so the Hungarian folk-dance is the natural product of the Hungarian horsemen's celebration, a direct descendant of

722 spent by workers on active military service should count
461 more than the actual days when computing the time which entitles the workers to paid holidays.

War-time wages.

722 To safeguard the living wage of the workers and to
465 keep it in alignment with the rising costs of living the Government ordered that wage supplements should be paid above the regular wage rate stabilized for the duration. The payment of these war-time wage supplements was ordered on three occasions, consequently the wage rate has risen thirty per cent on the average since the beginning of the war.

Enlisted workers.

701 Several new legal and administrative measures were
427 passed to safeguard the interests of enlisted men and their dependents. In 1941 an order in council directed that for non-payment of rents enlisted men cannot be made to vacate houses, apartments or living quarters rented by them and the courts can adjudge that their rents be payable by easy instalments.

Discharge.

701 Industrial and commercial employees cannot be
466 discharged while they are serving in the forces. If the employee has received living quarters from his employer in addition to his wages they cannot be taken away from him or from his dependents. Enlisted men must be re-employed if they report for work within eight days after their discharge from the forces.

Wage allowances to dependents.

The employer must pay the enlisted men in the ranks or their dependents 50% of their monthly salary during their period of military training and this amount is increased by 10% for each child. The rent of their living quarters if supplied by the employer cannot be deducted from the above amount.

Industrial and agricultural labourers.

The industrial connections of the enlisted men cannot be severed while they are doing military service, and the same applies to agricultural labourers, and if they have dependents their employer must continue to furnish the dependents with the services in kind contracted for (rent-free homes, fuel, garden space, keeping a certain number of domestic animals, etc.).

Since 1938 laws ensure that the jobs of farm overseers be held for them and their dependents be provided for by the employer while the overseers serve with the army. Since 1942 the needy dependents of enlisted men get separation allowances. They also enjoy certain privileges in rationing.

Civil servants.

A number of legal measures protect the interests of enlisted civil servants. The essence of these measures is that no distinction should be made between enlisted and exempted civil servants to the detriment of the former in the matter of promotion, placement in rank, etc.

Disabled soldiers, war widows.

One of the provisions of the National Defence Act orders that disabled soldiers and war widows should be

729 awarded pensions irrespective of the length of military service. During the first world war no such law was in force.

Taxation.

701 651 The enlisted men and dependents of soldiers killed in action profit by various taxation measures. For instance, in some cases their tax arrears are written off. The collection of taxes of enlisted men is deferred for a longer period. Arrears in municipal rental taxes payable by enlisted men are sometimes treated as irrecoverable claims.

000 In this resumé of war-time measures, only the most important features of state aid to soldiers, and to others entitled to special consideration on account of the war, have been briefly outlined.

VI. HUNGARY — A SOCIAL STATE.

One of the oldest themes of anti-Hungarian propaganda, which is repeated over and over again, is the assertion that Hungary is a feudalistic state motivated by reactionary conceptions of life and remaining far behind its neighbours in the matter of social reform. Occasionally publications appear abroad trying to prove this assertion by specious comparisons.

The Hungarian statutes, institutions, and governmental measures already described speak for themselves, and the data given show that Hungary's social policy has kept pace with general European social progress. Hungary was the fifth state to limit child labour early in the nineteenth century, the fourth state to institute family allowances, one of the first to restrict night labour and to legislate for

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665 interested observers, particularly as the shaky foundations of the coalition government, built on a tenuous layer of last minute political compromises, collapsed almost immediately under their own weight.

In January and February 1947 several hundred persons were suddenly arrested by the police. The Communist Ministry of the Interior claimed that a large-scale and secret conspiracy was under way with the object of restoring the rule of Nicholas Horthy who fled the country in October 1944. The conspirators were accused of wanting to establish their own government, drawing largely on personnel associated with Horthy's regime. To achieve this it was stated, they organized the secret *Magyar Közösség* (Hungarian Unity Society) which was controlled by two small groups of the counterrevolutionary elite, a political Committee of Seven and a military Commission of Six. The discovery of this conspiracy and the ensuing purge were carefully timed so as to remove certain potentially dangerous anti-Communist elements before the Soviet Army would have to leave the country.[20]

665 The purge of "reactionary plotters" was directed against two definite ●701 groups in Hungary's public life, the Army and the Smallholders Party. It first intended to remove a few high-ranking Army leaders in order to streamline the remaining meager armed forces of the country. The Army would thus be re-screened into a highly reliable political force under the leadership of such extreme Communists as General Pálffy who has been the real power in the Ministry of War ever since the first reorganization by the coalition government. It is interesting to note that among the first few persons arrested in this "rightist-reactionary conspiracy against the state"[21] were many of the chief protagonists of the Hungarian-Soviet armistice negotiations of 1944-1945, men who spent several months in Moscow preparatory to the final surrender. General Vörös, Faraghó and Almássy were leaders of this group, and their arrests were carried out by the Communist controlled Political Department of the War Ministry, an organization which played a notorious

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20 According to the terms of the peace treaty, ninety days after ratification all Soviet troops except for a few units guarding the lines of communication between Russia and Austria must be withdrawn from Hungary.

21 Cf. *Szabad Szó*, organ of the National Peasant Party, Jan. 16, 1947, and *Világ*, Jan. 18, 1947. News of a "fascist" conspiracy quickly spread abroad where it caused immediate speculations concerning the future destinies of Hungary, involving the inevitability of a Communist dictatorship. Cf. "Die Verhaftungen in Budapest," *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, Jan. 3, 4, 5 and 6, 1947; "Hungarian Arrests, Alleged Foreign Aid to Conspirators," *The Manchester Guardian*, Jan. 18, 1947; "Hungarian General Flees, and Hungarian Communist Demands," *The Times*, London, Jan. 14, 1947; C. M. Rodney, "The Hungarian Conspiracy," *The Central European Observer*, Jan. 24, 1947.

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role throughout the liquidation of the conspiracy. The Army leader most seriously implicated was Major General Lajos Dálnoki-Veress, who apparently served as head of *Magyar Közösség*, central organ of the reactionary plot. When the conspiracy was unmasked, the Ministry of the Interior used General Veress' "full confession" to complete the list of suspects; within a few days it arrested well over one hundred "fascist criminals," including six deputies of the Smallholders Party.[22]

As the Communists and Socialists continued to tighten control over the government, the weeding out of anti-democratic factions involved primarily three important Cabinet Ministries; Foreign Affairs, Agriculture and Reconstruction. Again the most prominent victims proved to be members of the Smallholders Party. The Ministry of Interior suddenly insisted that one of the anti-Communist members of Parliament, Béla Kovács, secretary of the Smallholders Party, be arrested. In Kovács' case all previous formalities were neglected; he was summarily jailed by Soviet occupational authorities on a set of charges including espionage against the Soviet Army, terrorism against the Russian occupation forces and participation in the formation of armed anti-Soviet groups.

Shortly after these arrests, Vice-Premier Rákosi demanded a national election, a new popular mandate to the two workers' parties by which Hungary's achievements could effectively be insured and decisive steps be taken in the fight of progressivism against feudalism. The Social Democratic Party fully supported Communist demands throughout these revolutionary developments. Giving a new and more flexible definition of democracy in Hungary, Arpád Szakasits explained at a Communist-Socialist rally that the Government could no longer be based on "mere arithmetical illusions." He argued that the "unnatural" electoral victory of the Smallholders could not form the basis of political rights. "We have always demanded a thorough purge of the Smallholders Party, and told its leaders *to abandon arithmetical illusions. We urged them to allow only peasants and other honest people to speak in their councils.*"[23]

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22 Cf. "Die Verhaftungen in Budapest, Ein Communique des Innenministeriums," *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, Jan. 6, 1947, front page; Albion Ross, "Hungary Reports Plot to Restore Horthy to Power," *The New York Times*, Jan. 5, 1947, pp. 1 and 35. László Rajk, Communist Minister of the Interior, controls the entire police system; he is not a Moscow emigré, but an extremist fanatic for whom even the Moscow-trained group of Communists is too slow. His brother was a Nazi stormtrooper, he himself is a fairly young ex-schoolteacher. Rajk was instrumental in carrying out the full-fledged purge of the Hungarian Army.

23 Cf. *Magyar Nemzet*, Jan. 19, 1947, p. 1. (Italics mine.)